

Peacekeeping



WHAT IS PEACEKEEPING?

- What does a peacekeeper do?
- How did it become a major part of the United Nations?
- What is the role of peacekeeping in the world today?

INTRODUCTION

As a major function of the United Nations, peacekeeping is a means to allowing countries that are struggling with violence, conflicts, and instability to find solutions to those issues and thereby create conditions for lasting peaceⁱ. The key focus to finding peace revolves around providing security through a deployment of global troops and focusing on providing support to help resolve political instability. While the goal is to create lasting peace in areas of unrest, the process of building the end goal demands patience and due diligence as resolving the conflicts takes time.

There are currently 16 UN peace operations deployed on four continents.



These include 15 peacekeeping operations, and one special political mission in Afghanistan. These are all led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).

PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

The deployment of peacekeepers and the global operations is determined by the United Nations Security Councilⁱⁱ. The Security Council evaluates and decides if and how to respond to global crises through reports from the Secretary-General and meetings to discuss issues and determining the necessary course of action. Under Article 25 of the UN Charter, all members of the UN are to comply with the decisions of the Security Council.

In determining whether or not to send peacekeeping forces to a region, the Security Council evaluates the following criteria:

- ❖ Whether there is a ceasefire in place and the parties have committed themselves to a peace process intended to reach a political settlement;
- ❖ Whether a clear political goal exists and whether it can be reflected in the mandate;
- ❖ Whether a precise mandate for a UN operation can be formulated;
- ❖ Whether the safety and security of UN personnel can be reasonably ensured, including in particular whether reasonable guarantees can be obtained from the main parties or factions regarding the safety and security of UN personnel.

There are currently 16 UN peacekeeping operations world wide, located in 4 continents. In addition to the over-arching goal is creating peace, UN peacekeeping operations also work on a number of smaller operations within the goal of reaching peace. These operations include: facilitating political processes, protect civilians, electoral assistance, disarming and reintegrating former military combatants, promoting human rights, and retorting the integrity of the state laws.

HISTORY OF THE ISSUE

While not always a guarantee, peacekeeping is a rigorous and delicate operation that may not always be successful. However, the efforts of the United Nations Peacekeeping have been recognized by the world, being

award the Nobel Peace Prize in 1988ⁱⁱⁱ. It was 40 years prior, in 1948 that the first UN Peacekeeping mission was mandated; the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization was mandated to monitor the armistice agreement between the Israel and its neighboring nations. In addition to this mission the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) are the two oldest peacekeeping operations where unarmed UN military observes are deployed with the intent of stabilizing situations,





maintaining ceasefires, and building a channel through which peaceful resolution can be attained to resolve conflicts.

There are key principals by which all UN Peacekeeping missions are guided:

- *Consent of the parties:* Agreeing to find a solution and requesting UN support
- *Impartiality:* Remaining unbiased towards any side
- *Non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the peacekeeping mission.*

THE COMPLEXITY OF PEACEKEEPING

While peacekeeping can draw conclusions of being 'unarmed' and 'nonviolent', such is not always the case. ONUC, the UN Operation in the Congo of 1960 was one of the earliest armed peacekeeping operations. This was a large-scaled operation, having almost 20,000 military personnel on hand to help bring peace to the Congo. This mission demonstrated the downside of engaging in conflict resolution, as 250 UN peacekeeping workers died.

With time the complexity of peacekeeping missions expanded with the goal of achieving sustainable peace required more than just ground troops, police, and military-observe personnel to monitor military operations and maintaining cease-fires. Peacekeeping missions would expand to include administers, economists, political officers, election observers, and human rights monitors amongst other personnel to help achieve sustainable peace through focusing on development factors such as building governments with democratic practices, building groundwork for sustainable development, and policies that support citizens and increase government accountability to reduce corruption and build a strong foundation for a sovereign state.

Additionally, what makes the deployment of peacekeeping often difficult is the consensus of the Security Council and their ability to agree on whether or not a peacekeeping operation should be deployed or not. Moreover, the Security Council may also choose to withdraw from a mission if they feel as though the operation is not progressing with the mission.

POST-COLD WAR ERA

PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS ADDED (1989-1994)

- ❖ **Angola** - UN Angola Verification Mission I (UNAVEM I) and UN Angola Verification Mission II (UNAVEM II),
- ❖ **Cambodia** - UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC),
- ❖ **El Salvador** - UN Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL),
- ❖ **Mozambique** - UN Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ)
- ❖ **Namibia** - UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG),
- ❖ **Yugoslavia** - UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR)
- ❖ **Rwanda** - UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR)
- ❖ **Somalia** - UN Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II)
- ❖ *Total number of UN Peacekeepers increased from 11,000 to 75,000*

Source: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/surge.shtml>

While peacekeeping was seen as a major success, issues would come to expose the flaws of missions in disputed regions. Conflicts would become more focused on intra-state affairs, rather than just inter-state ones as armed conflicts embattled neighboring states. This was evident in the 1990's as conflicts in former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and Somalia would come to place major scrutiny and pressure on peacekeeping missions.

In these countries, while the goal remained to build peace, these operations would turn out to be beyond resolvable. While the UN Peacekeepers make every attempt to bring about peace, this cannot be possible if the leaders of the nation and warring parties do not make an attempt to make a conscious decision to strive for improvement. In the Secretary-General's report post-mission report on UNSOM II in Somalia, the report explains that in retrospect to the failed mission, because the leaders and people of Somalia did not make a conscious effort to create political and security conditions in which peacemaking and peace-keeping was effective, the Security Council passed resolution 954 to abort the mission in March of 1994^{iv}.

What made the cases in the Balkans, Rwanda, and Somalia unique was the difficulties the UN Peacekeeping forces faced in these regions. These peacekeeping missions proved to be difficult for the fact ceasefires were not always maintainable as warring parties continued to carry out acts of violence. Additionally, UN Peacekeepers were not always fully equipped to manage the intensity of the issues. As peacekeeping,



engaging in combat with warring parties was only an option when done out of self-defense. In the case of former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and Somalia, peacekeeping was not even an option since violent attacks remained prominent in spite of UN efforts; condemning violence and attempting to promote peaceful dialogue—something that proved to be an uphill battle. As a result, these three missions would go on to scrutinize the effectiveness of UN

Peacekeeping, forcing the United Nations to reevaluate the effectiveness of peacekeeping and understand where improvements could be made to the operations.

PRESENT DAY

Peacekeeping continues to be an integral part of the United Nations. While missions are not always flawless in carrying out the objectives, they do make a lasting impact on nations where local people recount the tragedies of war and political unrest. Needless to say, since the start of UN Peacekeeping operations in the 1950's, the demand of more operations has continued to grow; the increase in demand for resources, military and peacekeeping personnel, and international multi-lateral support has risen as well.

What can make peacekeeping so difficult is the fact that every mission and every region where conflict is prevalent has an issue that is unique to the other conflicts. Therefore, every mission needs to treat each one with care and certainty that there is sufficient

focus on the problems and needs of each country where a conflict remains outstanding.

RECENT PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS

- **Burundi** - UN Operation in Burundi (ONUB);
- **Chad and the Central African Republic** - UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT);
- **Côte d'Ivoire** - UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI);
- **Democratic Republic of the Congo** - UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO);
- **Eritrea/Ethiopia** - UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE)
- **Liberia** - UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL);
- **Sierra Leone** - UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL);
- **Sudan** - UN Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) in the south of the country and African Union-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in Darfur), UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS);
- **Syria** - UN Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS).

DISCUSSING THE ISSUE

Peacekeeping remains an instrumental element of the United Nations, however still does not remain without its flaws. In some UN Peacekeeping missions, a major hole remained in the lack of UN military personnel and police forces to manage and sustain operations. The early exit from Rwanda and Somalia echo the sentiments stressed the importance of stronger assessment of how peacekeeping missions can be effective in regions where violence was still highly prominent, and would deter the mission from achieving its goal.

THE BRAHIMI REPORT

The first response to addressing the shortcomings of peacekeeping issues was introduced in 2000. The Brahimi Report, named after Algerian Ambassador to the United Nations, H.E Lakhdar Brahimi, was a study on UN Peacekeeping Operations and

Security. Organized by Secretary General Kofi Annan in 2000, this was a major step towards reform of UN Peacekeeping operations. This report was headed by a panel of ten experts on region conflict, spearheaded by Ambassador Brahimi, it investigated ways in which UN Peacekeeping could be reformed.

The report found key issues in the lack of international support from member-states of the United Nations. This was a key issue, as financial support was needed to ensure the success of peacekeeping operations; demanding the support from member-states was crucial. Furthermore, a more unified approach was necessary in which political, personnel, and material support would be needed to aid the struggle for peace in troubled nations^{vi}.

In essence, a major proponent of this report was a call for unified support from the international community and raising support for the peacekeeping operations. With more active cooperation and participation from more nations, peacekeeping missions would be able to deploy faster and work more effectively with the adequate resources to improve conditions in disputed regions.



HIGH LEVEL INDEPENDENT PANEL

Even since the Brahimi Report and the reforms that it was able to bring about to peacekeeping operations, Secretary General Ban Ki Moon recently established a High Level Independent Panel on UN Peace operations. This panel was chaired by Mr. Jose Ramos-Horta of Timor-Leste to chair the Panel with Ameera Haq as Vice-Chair to assess the effectiveness of missions. Furthermore, the purpose of this panel was to study peacekeeping missions and understand where improvements can be made for future missions. Since its establishment, the needs and demands of peacekeeping have

expanded tremendously, requiring more UN personnel. The key focus here was devoted to raising awareness about the future of peacekeeping missions.

"The world is changing and UN peace operations must change with it if they are to remain an indispensable and effective tool in promoting international peace and security."

-Secretary General Ban Ki Moon

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Is there a peacekeeping mission currently in your nation?
- How can UN Peacekeeping missions be improved?
- How can your nation support the resolution of a conflict in another nation? Financial support? Material Support? Political support?
- How are UN Peacekeeping operations instrumental to finding sustainable peace in a nation riddled with violence?
- Why is it important for global participation in UN Peacekeeping operations?

RESEARCH SITES

United nations peacekeeping

[HTTP://WWW.UN.ORG/EN/PEACEKEEPING/](http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/)

United Nations rule of law: The Brahimi report

[HTTP://WWW.UNROL.ORG/DOC.ASPX?N=BRAHIMI+REPORT+PEACEKEEPING.PDF](http://www.unrol.org/doc.aspx?N=BRAHIMI+REPORT+PEACEKEEPING.PDF)

ⁱ <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/peacekeeping.shtml>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/rolesc.shtml>

ⁱⁱⁱ http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1988/

^{iv} http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/1995/231

^v <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/reform.shtml>

^{vi} http://www.usembassy.it/file2000_08/alia/a0082308.htm